

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel claims 33, 36 and 43 – 46.

Please amend the claim to read as indicated below.

1 – 26. (canceled)

27. (currently amended) An illumination system, comprising:

a plate an optical element having a raster element having a plurality of raster elements
situated thereon for directing a light beam having a wavelength ≤ 193 nm; and
a movable carrier upon which said ~~optical element~~ plate is arranged, for positioning said
~~raster element~~ plate relative to said light beam.

28. (previously presented) The illumination system of claim 27, further comprising:
a reticle plane, wherein said reticle plane is defined by a y-direction and an x-direction, and
wherein said carrier is moveable in said x-direction.

29. (previously presented) The illumination system of claim 27, further comprising:
a reticle plane within which a reticle is moveable in a first direction,
wherein said carrier is moveable in a second direction.

30. (previously presented) The illumination system of claim 29, wherein said second
direction is substantially perpendicular to said first direction.

31. (currently amended) The illumination system of claim 27,
~~wherein said raster element is one of a plurality of raster elements on said optical element,~~
wherein said light beam impinges onto said ~~optical element~~ plurality of raster elements, and
said plurality of raster elements partition said light beam into a plurality of light
bundles, and
wherein said plurality of light bundles substantially overlap one another in a reticle plane.

32. (currently amended) The illumination system of claim 27, wherein said ~~optical element~~ plate is one of a plurality of ~~optical elements~~ plates arranged on said carrier.

33. (canceled)

34. (currently amended) ~~An illumination system, comprising a plate having (a) a raster element situated thereon for directing a light beam having a wavelength ≤ 193 nm, and (b) The~~ illumination system of claim 27, wherein at least one of said plurality of raster elements comprises an actuator for positioning said raster element at least one of said plurality of raster elements relative to said light beam.

35. (previously presented) The illumination system of claim 34, wherein said actuator changes an orientation of said raster element relative to said plate.

36. (canceled)

37. (currently amended) A system for illuminating a reticle in a reticle plane, comprising:
a ~~plate an optical element~~ having a plurality of raster elements situated thereon for directing
a light beam having a wavelength ≤ 193 nm, and
a table upon which said ~~optical element~~ plate is situated, for moving said ~~optical element~~ plate relative to said light beam,
wherein said plurality of raster elements partition said light beam into a plurality of light
bundles, and
wherein said plurality of light bundles substantially overlap one another in said reticle plane
and define a ring field of illumination in said reticle plane.

38. (currently amended) ~~An illumination system, comprising:~~ The illumination system of claim 37,
~~an optical element having a plurality of raster elements, for partitioning a light beam having~~
~~a wavelength ≤ 193 nm into a plurality of light bundles,~~

wherein said plurality of light bundles substantially overlap one another in a reticle plane of said illumination system and define a ring field of illumination in said reticle plane, and
wherein at least one of said plurality of raster elements is adjustable to change said ring field of illumination in said reticle plane.

39. (previously presented) The illumination system of claim 38, wherein said at least one of said plurality of raster elements, when adjusted to change said ring field of illumination in said reticle plane, also changes an illumination in an exit pupil of said illumination system.

40. (previously presented) The system of claim 38, wherein said at least one of said plurality of raster elements is tiltable.

41. (previously presented) The system of claim 38, wherein said at least one of said plurality of raster elements is displaceable.

42. (previously presented) The system of claim 38, wherein said at least one of said plurality of raster elements is replaceable.

43 – 46. (canceled)

47. (currently amended) A projection exposure apparatus, comprising:

- (a) an illumination system for illuminating an object with light having a wavelength \leq 193 nm,

wherein said illumination system includes (i) ~~an optical element having a raster element~~ a plate having a plurality of raster elements situated thereon, and (ii) a movable carrier upon which said ~~optical element plate~~ plate is arranged, for positioning said ~~raster element plate~~ plate relative to a beam of said light; and

- (b) a projection objective for imaging said object onto a light sensitive substrate.

48. (previously presented) The projection exposure apparatus of claim 47, wherein said object is a pattern-bearing mask.

49. (currently amended) A method for manufacturing a microelectronic component, comprising using ~~the~~ an projection exposure apparatus of claim 47 having:

(a) an illumination system for illuminating an object with light having a wavelength \leq 193 nm,

wherein said illumination system includes (i) a plate having a plurality of raster elements situated thereon, and (ii) a movable carrier upon which said plate is arranged, for positioning said plate relative to a beam of said light; and

(b) a projection objective for imaging said object onto a light sensitive substrate.